ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCY COMMISSION

1987-88 CLIENT PROFILE

BY

TYPE OF DRUG USED

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FREDERICTON, N.B.

prepared by

E. Campbell

Research Branch
Alcoholism and Drug Dependency Commission

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Introduction

The information reported here was collected via the Client Information Retrieval System. Information on "substance abused" is collected from each admission in both inpatient and outpatient facilities. The drug categories used in this report are general: "street drug", "prescription drug", or "alcohol", and correspond to the categories available on the Client Questionnaire. The "substance abused" may be reported as any one of these options alone or in any combination.

Client Profiles

During 1987-88, 1430 admissions to inpatient facilities and 534 admissions to outpatient services reported using drugs, either alone or in combination with alcohol. That is, 29% of inpatient admissions and 36% of outpatient admissions were using drugs other than alcohol alone.

Among those 1430 inpatients who reported some drug use (ie. eliminating the 3466 "alcohol only" clients), 34% were using street drugs in combination with alcohol; 30% were using prescription drugs in combination with alcohol; 14% were using "street drugs" only; 11% reported using prescription drugs only; 10% reported using all three ("street drugs", prescription drugs and alcohol); and only 2% reported using "street drugs" and prescription drugs in combination.

Among the 534 outpatient admissions who reported some drug use (ie. eliminating the 998 "alcohol only" admissions), a slightly different pattern of reported drug use emerged, with more emphasis on "street drugs". Of those who reported using drugs (either alone or in combination with alcohol), 39% reported using "street drugs"

in combination with alcohol; 28% reported using "street drugs" alone; 12% reported using all three in combination; 11% reported using prescription drugs and alcohol; 7% used prescription drugs only; and 2% reported using "street drugs" and prescription drugs.

With the exception of use of prescription drugs, males were predominant in each of the six drug user categories employed (see tables). Approximately three quarters of the 39 admissions to O.P.D. who reported that they used "prescription drugs only" were female, and half of the 157 admissions to inpatient facilities who used "prescription drugs only" were also female.

Again, with the exception of the categories in which females predominate (ie. prescription drug use), the majority of the "drug user" clients reported that they were single (ranging from 57% to 77% of inpatients and 60% to 83% of outpatients). By comparison, among "alcohol use only" clients, less than a third were single. This reflects the age differences between the groups, with the younger clientele more likely to be the drug users and the older clients, the alcohol only users.

The mother tongue of the clientele has also proved to be of interest in the development of this profile. While the language breakdown for the province is approximately two thirds English and one third French, the "prescription drug only" category shows an over representation of francophones, and the "all three" drug use category shows a predominance of anglophones. English speaking clients are over-represented among outpatients generally.

Among this drug using population, large proportions (ranging from 36% to 55%) reported that the highest educational level that they had achieved was grade 9 or less. Among the outpatient clients, 21% of the prescription drug users and 20% of the "prescription drug and alcohol" users reported having attained only grade 6 or

less. These are the same two groups which contained the higher proportions of female clients.

Clients who reported that they use "alcohol only" were much more likely to report that they had a job as their means of financial support. Among inpatients, 36% to 52% of drug using clients reported that they were dependant upon Public Assistance. Twenty-five to forty-five per cent (25% to 45%) of outpatients reported being on Public Assistance. About a fifth of the "street drug users" were dependent upon their families for support.

With the exception of prescription drug users, high percentages of the drug using clients reported that they had no means of financial support at all: 12% to 17% of "street drug" users and 15% to 21% of users of "all three" categories of drugs.

The majority of inpatient drug users (60 to 75%) in all categories reported using drugs daily. The same was true for outpatient clients where there was very little difference in usage patterns, except that over 82% of prescription drug users reporting using every day.

By comparison, among "alcohol only" clients, about a third to a half were daily users and approximately one third to one quarter were "binge users".

Tables detailing these comments are presented on the next four pages of this report.

PROFILE OF ADDCNB CLIENTELE BY TYPE OF DRUG USED: INPATIENT CLIENTS ADMITTED IN 1987-88

VARIABLES	STREET DRUG ONLY N=206	Rx DRUGS ONLY N=157	Rx & STREET DRUGS N=21	ALCOHOL/ STREET DRUGS N=487	ALCOHOL/ Rx DRUGS N=422	ALL THREE N=137	ALCOHOL ONLY N=3466
% OF INPATIENT POPULATION:	4.2%	3.2%	0.4%	10.0%	8.6%	2.8%	70.8%
SEX:							
MALE	77.1%	50.3%	86.7%	80.7%	73.3%	72.2%	87.3%
FEMALE	22.9%	49.7%	13.3%	19.3%	26.7%	27.8%	12.7%
MARITAL STATUS:							
SINGLE	76.7%	26.1%	57.1%	65.6%	32.2%	55.5%	30.0%
MARRIED	8.3%	37.6%	23.8%	9.5%	26.3%	8.0%	27.6%
DIVORCED	5.3%	15.9%	14.3%	8.6%	16.1%	10.2%	16.2%
SEPARATED	6.8%	8.9%	0.0%	8.0%	17.1%	21.9%	15.7%
WIDOWED	0.0%	3.8%	0.0%	1.6%	1.7%	1.5%	4.4%
COMMON-LAW	2.9%	7.6%	4.8%	6.8%	6.6%	2.9%	6.1%
MOTHER TONGUE:							
ENGLISH	64.1%	54.1%	71.4%	58.1%	63.7%	75.9%	63.8%
FRENCH	34.0%	45.9%	28.6%	40.7%	33.4%	19.7%	32.2%
OTHER	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	2.8%	4.4%	4.0%
EDUCATION:							
0-6 YEARS	11.2%	10.2%	14.3%	8.2%	24.2%	13.9%	17.9%
7-9 YEARS	35.9%	26.1%	33.3%	31.6%	30.1%	35.8%	34.2%
10-12 YEARS	43.7%	40.8%	38.1%	51.1%	38.6%	45.3%	37.8%
VOCATIONAL	0.5%	2.6%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
BUSINESS	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
TECHNICAL	1.5%	5.7%	0.0%	2.7%	1.9%	1.5%	2.4%
1-4 YR. UNIV.	4.9%	5.1%	9.5%	1.2%	2.1%	2.2%	2.9%
UNIV. DEGREE	0.0%	5.1%	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%	0.7%	2.3%
GRAD SCHOOL	0.5%	1.9%	4.8%	1.2%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%
OTHER	1.9%	1.3%	0.0%	0.6%	1.0%	0.0%	0.8%

PROFILE OF ADDCNB CLIENTELE BY TYPE OF DRUG USED: INPATIENT CLIENTS ADMITTED IN 1987-88

VARIABLES	STREET DRUG ONLY N=206	Rx DRUGS ONLY N=157Á	Rx & STREET DRUGS N=21	ALCOHOL/ STREET DRUGS N=487	ALCOHOL/Á Rx DRUGS N=422	ALL THREE N=137	ALCOHOL ONLY N=3466
SOURCE OF INCOME:							
JOB	11.7%	19.1%	14.3%	16.8%	17.5%	16.8%	27.5%
SPOUSE	1.0%	8.3%	0.0%	0.2%	5.0%	0.0%	1.8%
FAMILY	18.9%	5.7%	4.8%	6.8%	1.2%	5.8%	1.0%
FRIENDS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
PUBLIC ASST.	35.9%	33.8%	52.4%	41.3%	48.3%	48.9%	34.4%
UIC	15.5%	12.1%	19.1%	20.5%	12.6%	9.5%	18.6%
PENSION	0.5%	13.4%	0.0%	0.8%	7.1%	2.2%	9.8%
INSURANCE	0.0%	1.9%	14.8%	0.2%	0.7%	2.2%	0.4%
WORKER'S COMP	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	0.8%	1.4%	0.0%	0.8%
SAVINGS	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
INVESTMENTS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.1%
NONE	16.5%	1.9%	4.8%	11.9%	5.5%	14.6%	4.4%
FREQUENCY OF USE / WEEK:							
1-2 DAYS/WK	6.8%	2.6%	0.0%	6.2%	4.3%	2.9%	8.2%
3-5 DAYS/WK	10.2%	7.0%	14.3%	15.0%	8.3%	10.2%	12.7%
6-7 DAYS/WK	65.1%	73.9%	76.2%	58.5%	61.6%	75.2%	55.1%
BINGE USER	18.0%	16.6%	9.5%	20.3%	25.8%	11.7%	24.0%

PROFILE OF ADDCNB CLIENTELE BY TYPE OF DRUG USED: OUTPATIENT CLIENTS ADMITTED IN 1987-88

VARIABLES	STREET DRUG ONLY N=147	Rx DRUGS ONLY N=39	Rx & STREET DRUGS N=12	ALCOHOL/ STREET DRUGS N=210	ALCOHOL/ Rx DRUGS N=60	ALL THREE N=66	ALCOHOL ONLY N=998
% OF O.P.D. POPULATION	9.6%	2.5%	0.8%	13.7%	3.9%	4.3%	65.1%
SEX:							
MALE	75.7%	25.6%	91.7%	83.8%	60.9%	85.5%	86.2%
FEMALE	24.3%	74.4%	8.3%	16.2%	39.1%	14.5%	13.8%
MARITAL STATUS:							
SINGLE	64.0%	33.3%	83.3%	70.6%	26.1%	60.5%	31.8%
MARRIED	16.9%	38.5%	8.3%	10.5%	29.7%	6.6%	33.1%
DIVORCED	4.8%	10.3%	8.3%	6.6%	21.9%	9.2%	14.1%
SEPARATED	7.4%	10.3%	0.0%	6.6%	14.1%	14.5%	11.0%
WIDOWED	0.5%	5.1%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	4.0%	2.4%
COMMON-LAW	6.4%	2.6%	0.0%	5.3%	6.3%	5.3%	7.6%
MOTHER TONGUE:							
ENGLISH	75.1%	59.0%	91.7%	72.4%	60.9%	86.8%	76.5%
FRENCH	24.9%	41.0%	8.3%	26.3%	39.1%	11.8%	22.6%
OTHER	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	1.3%	0.9%
HIGHEST EDUCATION LEVEL ACHIEVED:							
0-6 YEARS	6.4%	20.5%	0.0%	7.9%	20.3%	7.9%	11.5%
7-9 YEARS	29.6%	12.8%	50.0%	36.8%	35.9%	27.6%	31.0%
10-12 YEARS	54.0%	51.3%	41.7%	45.6%	34.4%	56.6%	43.5%
VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL	4.8%	7.7%	0.0%	3.1%	3.1%	1.3%	6.0%
1-4 YR. UNIVERSITY	4.2%	5.1%	8.3%	4.4%	3.1%	2.6%	3.8%
UNIVERSITY DEGREE	0.5%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	2.6%	3.0%
GRADUATE SCHOOL	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	1.3%	0.8%
OTHER	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
	100.0%						

PROFILE OF ADDCNB CLIENTELE BY TYPE OF DRUG USED: OUTPATIENT CLIENTS ADMITTED IN 1987-88

VARIABLES	STREET DRUG ONLY N=147	Rx DRUGS ONLY N=39	Rx & STREET DRUGS N=12	ALCOHOL/A STREET DRUGS N=210	ALCOHOL/A Rx DRUGS N=60	ALL THREE N=66	ALCOHOL ONLY N=998
SOURCE OF INCOME:							
JOB	23.8%	12.8%	8.3%	18.9%	18.8%	14.5%	38.2%
SPOUSE	4.2%	15.4%	0.0%	0.4%	6.3%	0.0%	2.3%
FAMILY	23.3%	5.1%	33.3%	10.1%	1.6%	4.0%	2.8%
FRIENDS	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
PUBLIC ASST.	24.9%	38.5%	41.7%	36.8%	45.3%	44.7%	25.4%
UIC	9.0%	18.0%	8.3%	18.0%	10.9%	13.2%	14.6%
PENSION	1.1%	7.7%	0.0%	0.4%	46.9%	0.0%	7.4%
OTHER	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	1.6%	2.6%	2.1%
NONE	11.6%	2.6%	8.3%	14.9%	10.9%	21.1%	0.7%
FREQUENCY OF USE / WEEK:							
1-2 DAYS/WK	6.1%	2.6%	8.3%	4.0%	1.6%	4.0%	9.5%
3-5 DAYS/WK	20.4%	7.7%	25.0%	15.8%	15.6%	14.5%	20.5%
6-7 DAYS/WK	61.2%	82.1%	58.3%	64.0%	62.5%	69.7%	37.9%
BINGE USER	19.7%	7.7%	8.3%	16.2%	20.3%	11.8%	32.2%

Trends

The Client Information System has been collecting information on drug use in the seven categories since 1985-86, therefore it is possible to look for trends over this three year period only.

Overall there has not been a great change visible in the reported drug use patterns over time. Among inpatients there appears to be a trend toward fewer "alcohol only" clients, with a subsequent increase in the number of "alcohol in combination with some other drug" users. There was almost no change in outpatient patterns, although there appears to be drop in the proportion of female admissions reporting prescription drug use only, and an increase in the proportion of females reporting use of alcohol only.

A detailed overview of the trend information is presented on tables on the next two pages of this report.

TRENDS IN DRUG USE OVER TIME: INPATIENT CLIENTELE

	STREET DRUG		Rx DRUGS		Rx/STREET		ALC/STREET		ALCOHOL/Rx		ALL THREE		ALCOHOL ONLY	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1985-86	174	4.3%	146	3.6%	12	0.3%	326	8.0%	229	5.6%	100	2.5%	3092	75.8%
1986-87	194	4.6%	159	3.8%	14	0.3%	326	7.8%	330	7.9%	94	2.2%	3086	73.4%
1987-88	206	4.2%	157	3.2%	21	0.4%	487	10.0%	422	8.6%	137	2.8%	3466	70.8%

TRENDS IN DRUG USE OVER TIME: FEMALE INPATIENT CLIENTS

	STREET DRUG		Rx DRUGS		Rx/STREET		ALC/STREET		ALCOHOL/Rx		ALL THREE		ALCOHOL ONLY	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1985-86	48	7.7%	89	14.3%	5	0.8%	67	10.8%	48	7.7%	25	4.0%	340	54.7%
1986-87	41	6.2%	87	13.2%	7	1.1%	62	9.4%	89	13.5%	22	3.3%	351	53.3%
1987-88	47	5.8%	78	9.6%	3	0.3%	94	11.6%	113	13.9%	38	4.7%	440	54.1%
													813	

TRENDS IN DRUG USE OVER TIME: MALE INPATIENT CLIENTS

	STREET DRUG		Rx DRUGS		Rx/STREET		ALC/STREET		ALCOHOL/Rx		ALL THREE		ALCOHOL ONLY	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1985-86	126	3.6%	57	1.7%	7	0.2%	259	7.5%	181	5.2%	75	2.2%	2752	79.6%
1986-87	153	4.3%	72	2.0%	7	0.2%	264	7.5%	241	6.8%	72	2.0%	2735	77.2%
1987-88	159	3.9%	79	1.9%	18	0.4%	393	9.6%	309	7.6%	99	2.4%	3026	74.1%
	4083													

TRENDS IN DRUG USE OVER TIME: OUTPATIENT CLIENTELE

	STREET DRUG		Rx DRUGS		Rx/STREET		ALC/STREET		ALCOHOL/Rx		ALL THREE		ALCOHOL ONLY	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1985-86	117	10.2%	38	3.3%	7	0.6%	139	12.2%	64	5.6%	55	4.4%	729	63.7%
1986-87	133	12.6%	34	3.2%	7	0.7%	106	10.1%	48	4.6%	45	4.3%	681	64.6%
1987-88	147	9.6%	39	2.5%	12	0.8%	210	13.7%	60	3.9%	66	4.3%	998	65.1%

TRENDS IN DRUG USE OVER TIME: FEMALE OUTPATIENT CLIENTS

	STREET DRUG		Rx DRUGS		Rx/STREET		ALC/STREET		ALCOHOL/Rx		ALL THREE		ALCOHOL ONLY	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1985-86	29	12.2%	30	12.6%	4	1.7%	25	10.5%	27	11.3%	14	5.9%	109	45.8%
1986-87	39	19.1%	21	10.3%	5	2.5%	21	10.3%	17	8.3%	13	6.4%	88	43.1%
1987-88	46	15.2%	29	9.6%	1	0.3%	37	12.2%	25	8.3%	11	3.6%	154	50.8%

TRENDS IN DRUG USE OVER TIME: MALE OUTPATIENT CLIENTS

	STREET DRUG		Rx DRUGS		Rx/STREET		ALC/STREET		ALCOHOL/Rx		ALL THREE		ALCOHOL ONLY	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1985-86	88	9.7%	8	0.9%	3	0.3%	114	12.6%	37	4.1%	41	4.5%	620	68.4%
1986-87	94	11.1%	13	1.5%	2	0.2%	85	10.0%	31	3.6%	32	3.8%	593	69.8%
1987-88	132	10.5%	10	0.8%	11	0.9%	173	13.7%	35	2.8%	55	4.4%	845	67.0%

Discussion

This paper was written to provide profile information on drug-using clientele, a population which has in the past been overlooked in our presentation of client profiles. While nothing in the report is particularly startling to persons working in the field, it is important to see our conceptions about the population confirmed.

Some points of concern that warrant further discussion are the use of prescribed drugs by female clients, and the over-representation of francophones among the prescription drug using clientele. The most recent Canada's Health Promotion Survey[1] reports that the two most popularly used licit drugs are sleeping pills and tranquillizers, and that 8% of adult Canadians used sleeping pills in the twelve months prior to being surveyed and 6% used tranquillizers.

The use of sleeping pills is more prevalent among francophones than among anglophones, and francophone women are the group most likely to use sleeping pills (14%). Persons who have not progressed beyond high school have the highest frequency of sleeping pill use and this holds particularly true for women.

As with sleeping pills, the survey found that the frequency of tranquillizer use is greater among females than males. Women over the age of 65 are the most common users. Francophones report higher rates of tranquillizer use than do anglophones or other linguistic groups. Francophone women are the most frequent users of tranquillizers (13%).

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[1]Health and Welfare Canada (1988) Canada's Health Promotion Survey: Technical Report. Eds., Irving Rootman, Reg Warren, Thomas Stephens and Larry Peters. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada.

The report states that marital status is the key to understanding the distribution of the use of these drugs: "loneliness consequent to the breakdown of a marriage, being pensioned or losing one's life companion are strong predictors of the use of sleeping pills and tranquillizers."

The authors of the report note that these findings suggest that special attention should be given to the use of licit drugs by older women, especially francophone women. They also suggest that this use of drugs by aging Canadians, especially women, may be a more serious public health issue than the use of illicit drugs by youth.

The C.H.P. Survey also reported on the use of illicit drugs ("street drugs") and noted the following findings: use of stimulants, cannabis and cocaine is most prevalent among the young (15 to 24 years), males, and students.

Multiple drug use is most prevalent among the retired (8%) who combine tanquillizers and sleeping pills, and students (6%) who combine cannabis and cocaine. The use of more than one drug was more prevalent among francophones than anglophones or others, and particularly prevalent among francophone women.

These findings reported in the Health Promotion Survey serve to confirm the findings from our own information retrieval system, increasing confidence in the information that we have collected. They also reinforce the importance of using such data in planning and the development of policy and programming.